

Idaho System of Care

"Building on Each Other's Strengths"

www.idahosystemofcare.org

Spring 2006 Newsletter



Children exploring art piece

Regional News

Region 1

The community told the Kootenai Council on Children's Mental Health that they wanted diagnosis specific training. And we listened.

On March 7, 2006, the Kootenai Council on Children's Mental Health held an educational seminar on childhood bi-polar disorder with 74 community members in attendance. People came to learn about childhood bi-polar disorder and to network with parents and professionals. The event was organized by a subcommittee of the Council, chaired by Marcey Day, parent representative.

Gary Day, parent representative, was the master of ceremonies for the event. Presentations included "Early Onset Bi-polar Medications," by Russ Symbol, pharmacist, "Bi-Polar Interventions," and a presentation from a federal judge,

John Mitchell, about the possibility of beginning a children's mental health court.

We asked the participants to fill out a survey about the event. In the completed surveys, there were ideas about what we should do next. In general, people thought that the training was helpful. Participants seem to want more diagnosis specific training (i.e., Autism, Aspergers, Reactive Attachment Disorder, Depression, Conduct Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, and Adjustment Disorder).

We also recieved some helpful comments about the structure of our meeting (i.e., small group work, a panel of people affected by the disorder).

Overall, the event went very well and people enjoyed themselves. Good connections were made by community members who may not have connected had it not been for this meeting.

Submitted by Travis Cronin, Kootenai Council Chairperson

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Save the Date: 2006 System of Care Conference, May 1-2, Boise, Idaho

Region 2 is Getting the Word Out

*Submitted by Kathy Workman,
Council Member*

New Youth Coordinator and Nurse Practitioner

At least five children affected by serious emotional disturbances (SED) are involved in the activities. "It has been very positive. The children affected by SED are not having any problems interacting with the other kids, or with being compliant during activities," said Linda Bonds, Region 3 Children's Mental Health Council co-chair.

To learn more about Region 3 activities,
contact Linda Bonds at bonds1s@ctcweb.net.

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Bringing the Community Together

Council members learned about the various resources in the community. The training was videotaped so that all of the local councils could have a copy.

Region 4 is continuing to make progress. "We are looking forward to doing more," said Nikki Tangen, co-chair of Region 4 council, and parent.

Services and support coordinated to help parents of a child with Serious Emotional Disturbance develop an effective care plan — with the assistance of individuals chosen by the family — that is tailored to the needs of the child and locally administered.



Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health Update

House and Senate pass parent participation statute

Senate Bill 1413, which allows an increase in parent honoraria, overwhelmingly passed the House and Senate.

The process began with discussions about parent participation. Council members wanted to make sure parents received a standard honoraria for participating in council activities. Department of Health and Welfare attorneys checked into the honoraria rate, and discovered that the state rate was actually lower than the Department rate. A subcommittee of Regional council members then developed a proposal to restore the State honoraria rate to that of the Department, which is \$100 per day.

The proposal was submitted to the Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health (ICCMH) for review and approval. Sen. Denton Darrington, co-chair of the ICCMH, agreed to take the proposal as a bill to the Senate, and it passed. The ICCMH probably will have this as a decision item on their July agenda.

To view the statute, go to <http://www3.state.id.us/oasis/S1413.html#daily>.

Family Matters

Elizabeth Rivera is a walking testament to why it's important for families and communities to help children with serious emotional and behavioral disorders. Elizabeth wasn't fortunate enough to get the help she needed when she needed it most. However, by working diligently to understand her own mental health issues, she's become a better parent to her own children and a powerful advocate for children with SED and their families.

Growing up without the support of family or community

One of Elizabeth's earliest memories is of her mother collapsed on the floor from an overdose of prescription drugs. At age six, Elizabeth was too young to understand why her mother was intent on ending her life.

When her mother finally succeeded at age 25, Elizabeth and her siblings — an older brother and sister — were sent to live with her grandmother, a decision that set in motion a series of unfortunate events that included time spent in foster homes and juvenile detention.

Elizabeth's grandmother had her own mental health issues that prevented her from providing the children with the kind of supportive and nurturing environment they needed. The situation was compounded by Elizabeth's own behavior, which was becoming increasingly erratic.

Unable to cope, her grandmother took her to the local police station and turned her over to the authorities. With no other family members available to take her in — her father was serving time for a drug-related offense — Elizabeth entered California's child services system at age 11.

Over the next two years, Elizabeth was shuffled between 20 foster homes. During a stay at a group home, she was diagnosed as having attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and Tourette's syndrome. Elizabeth was placed on medication and was doing much better until she was transferred to a foster home where the family discontinued her medication. Without proper care, Elizabeth's mental health, and consequently her life, went from bad to worse. She ran away from her foster family at age 13 and, guided by a faint childhood memory, set out in search of her father's sister. Read the rest of Elizabeth's success story at:

www.idahosystemofcare.org

*As told to Marshall Brezonick
PBZ Communications*



Region 6

Traveling Art Display

Region 6 made sure that the traveling art display reached as many people as possible. Some of the locations for the display included:

- Highland High School
- Health and Welfare, Blackfoot
- Community Resource Fair, American Falls
- Bingham City Courthouse, Blackfoot
- Pine Ridge Mall, Chubbuck

Several events included dignitaries, such as County Commissioners at the Bingham City Courthouse. "The events were very successful," said Dr. David Case, Region 6 Council Chairperson. "We made the front page of the Blackfoot newspaper."



Traveling Art Display at the State Capitol

Want to learn more about using art to fight stigma? Contact Chandra Story at storyc@idhw.state.id.us

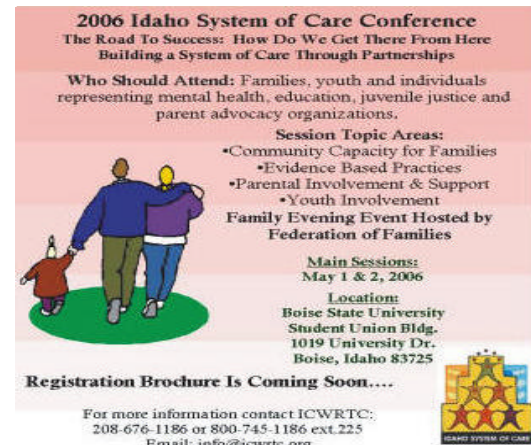


Community member views display

Save the Dates!

May 1-2

Idaho System of Care Conference



Registration is open for the 2006 System of Care conference, "The Road to Success: How Do We Get There from Here," at Boise State University, May 1-2.

Registration deadline: April 17

For the conference brochure and to register online, go to www.icwrtc.org. There is no registration fee, but seating is limited. Conference topics include:

- Individualized Educational Plans
- Working with Community Partners
- Families Again: A Look at their Trials and Tribulations
- Youth Track
- Cultural Myths and Beliefs
- System of Care 101
- Oppositional Defiant and Conduct Disorders
- Medicaid Reform

Keynote speaker Harold Briggs brings years of experience as a parent and advocate. Attendees are invited to an awards reception hosted by the Idaho Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health. "The World through Our Eyes," a statewide traveling art display, is a featured attraction.

Region 7

"Mother of the Year" McCurdy Takes Anti-Stigma Message to City Hall

Idaho's Mother of the Year is ready to take her anti-stigma message regarding children's mental health everywhere. And Rexburg City Hall is her first stop.

Cynthia McCurdy of Rexburg is a member of the Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health, and the Region 7 Council chair. She recently was named American Mothers Inc.'s "Idaho Mother of the Year."

On the local level, she is on the Madison/Fremont Children's Mental Health Council, and Rexburg Mayor Shawn Larsen invited her to make a presentation to council members after seeing "The World Through our Eyes," the statewide traveling art display.



Left: Cynthia McCurdy; Right: Mayor Lawson

Forget About Labels

Just like the art display, McCurdy began her presentation to the crowd of 300 with a visual. She removed labels from three cans of soup. "These are not labeled, but you probably know it is soup," she said. "I don't know about you, but I don't want to be labeled. And neither do our children."

More than 300 people, including city council members, the mayor, city employees, college representatives, and community member, attended the meeting.

McCurdy reported later that 90 percent of the audience — made up of the mayor, council, city employees, college representatives, and community members — knew someone with a mental illness.

She shared information about the children's mental health councils that have been formed around the state. "Everyone can make a difference in the lives of children with mental illness," she said.

Director for Park and Recreation pledged scholarships for children with special needs so they can be a part of the community through basketball, dance, and other sports.

"These children need to be successful and live productive lives in our communities, McCurdy reminded them. "Each one of us can make a difference if we check our own attitudes and what we believe."



Tribal Coordinating Council on the Move

Members of the Tribal Coordinating Council, state workers, and Elders went to the Tribal System of Care meetings in Portland, Oregon.

Some Council members attended a session called "Positive Indian Parenting," while Tribal employees attended Indian Child Protection Team training.

We attended various workshops, and saw models of System of Care in Indian Country throughout the United States. Many of our needs are the same. But more importantly, many of our community strengths are the same. A lot of our strengths are "naturally Native" — we have just forgotten about them in this busy modern world we live in.

One employee from each of the six Tribes in Idaho are scheduled to attend the National Indian Child Welfare Conference.

We are sending some parent and Tribal employee representatives to the Educating Every Child Institute in April. We also are sending one set of parents or family caretakers from each of the six Tribes.

Submitted by: Sarah Holt, Tribal Coordinating Council, Nez Perce Parent Representative



"A lot of our strengths are 'naturally Native' — we have just forgotten about them in this busy, modern world we live in."

Sarah Holt

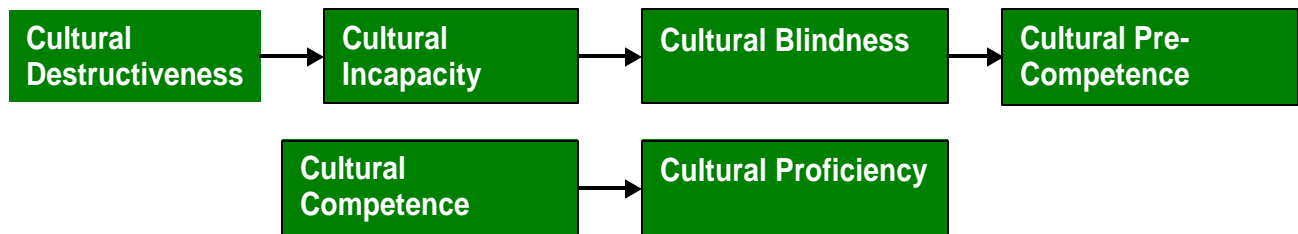
What is Cultural Competency?

Cultural competency is spelled **RESPECT**. It means we value our differences and serve others in a way that we would want to be served. Cultural Competency is defined through

- Policy
- Procedures
- Practices

Our policies set a standard for cultural competency. For example, most organizations have policies for serving people from all cultural groups. Procedures give guidance on how to serve people. Practice is how cultural groups are served, such as providing interpreters or traditional healers.

Most people move up and down a continuum of cultural competency. Which stage are you in?



For more information, go to <http://guccd.georgetown.edu/nccc/>.

Submitted by Chandra Story, Cultural Competency Lead

What is the System of Care Evaluation?

System of Care Evaluation is a research study designed to help find out if services received by families and children are effective. By providing input, families and children can help improve services for everyone.

Our evaluation in Idaho is one of more than 80 sites across the nation involved in evaluating System of Care services. As of April, more than 60 families are enrolled in the national evaluation.

Local evaluation specialists invite families working with Local Children's Mental Health Councils and Wraparound Specialists to become part of the system of care evaluation.

Interviews are conducted every six months, and are scheduled for a time and place of the family's convenience. Interviews are not conducted without written guardian consent.

Who Do I Contact if I have Questions?

Program Evaluators

Dr. Brenda Freeman
Northwest Nazarene University
623 Holly St., Nampa, ID 83686
(208) 467-8428
bjfreeman@nnu.edu

Dr. Ken Coll
Boise State University (E612)
1910 University Dr., Boise, ID 83725
(208) 426-1821
kcoll@boisestate.edu

Dr. Rick Phillips
Eastern Washington University
1619 West Point Rd., Spokane, WA 99201
(509) 325-4065
rickphillips.eagle@sisna.com

Submitted by Lynne Whiting, Local Evaluation Specialist

System of Care Leadership Meetings

"These kids need each and every one of you here. If it wasn't for the System of Care, my son would not have received help. I know the process can be frustrating, but we have to move forward," said Barbara Hill, Family Support Specialist.



Left: Chuck Halligan; Right: Tom Payne



Participants at Leadership Meeting

More than forty System of Care partners- parents, children's mental health workers, educators, juvenile justice workers- came together to do just that. Participants openly discussed successes, frustrations, and goals for the System. Leadership meetings were held April 5-6, at the Best Western in Boise.

Regional representative shared a variety of successes. In Region 7, councils work with colleges so that students can provide Respite care. The law enforcement training helped to decrease stigma on the Nez Perce Reservation- "It's okay now to say SED or mental illness," said Sarah Holt, tribal coordinating council representative.

Some participants expressed frustration with council roles. Documentation of council roles from Summer 2005 leadership meetings were shared with participants to facilitate discussion. After reviewing the roles, the group reinforced that it is okay for councils to share resource information with families and do community outreach. Intensive care management is reserved for Wraparound specialists. The discussion moved to possible goals for the System of Care. Some of these goals were:

- Involve more youth and parents in the System of Care
- Determine how councils can work with Wraparound Specialists
- Networking among councils statewide

The group decided to create a steering committee to plan the next leadership meeting this summer.

Your story could be here.

Ideas for stories are welcomed.
For confidentiality purposes, please do not use the real names of family members when submitting a story.

Send submissions to Chandra Story
at: storyc@idhw.state.id.us

Thank you!

Calling all Youth!

We want to hear from you.

Let your voice be heard! Tell everyone what is really like to live with a mental illness.

Your words could be displayed at the 2006 System of Care conference. To submit a quote, or learn more, contact James Sawyer, Youth involvement coordinator, at 1-800-905-3436 or jsawyer@idahofederation.org.



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Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
Division of Family and Community
Services
450 W. State Street, 5th Floor
Boise, ID 83720-0036